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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## **Maryland State Department of Education Announces Partnership with the Children's Aid National Center for Community Schools**

**BALTIMORE (September 28, 2023)** – Today, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) announced a new partnership with the Children's Aid National Center for Community Schools to expand support for school districts and community schools through the high-quality implementation of Blueprint Community Schools.

The Children's Aid National Center for Community Schools will work closely with MSDE's Executive Director of Community Schools and Expanded Learning, focusing its efforts on local education agencies and cohorts of community schools at different stages—those conducting needs assessments, those in their implementation plan year, and those in years three or more of implementation.

"We are embarking on a journey that will redefine the future of education in Maryland," said State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury. "This collaboration with the Children's Aid National Center for Community Schools provides us with a powerful engine to drive change. Its expertise in community-centric education will be invaluable in our unrelenting mission to narrow and ultimately close opportunity and achievement gaps. The Blueprint and our Strategic Plan are our compasses, leading us toward an education system where every child is equipped for college and career success. This partnership reflects our unyielding resolve to make this vision a reality for all Maryland students."

"We are thrilled to deepen our partnership with community school leaders and practitioners across the state of Maryland," said Abe Fernández, Director of the Children's Aid National Center for Community Schools. "This is an exciting time for the community schools movement nationally, and Maryland is emerging as an exemplar of how to take the community schools strategy to scale. We look forward to working with education leaders and partners across the state to advance their commitment to the academic achievement and healthy development of Maryland students."

This partnership signifies a crucial step forward in the state's commitment to educational excellence and equity. Together, MSDE and the National Center for Community Schools will strive to provide the essential resources and support needed for all Maryland students to achieve their full potential.

Children's Aid is a New York City-based organization dedicated to helping children in poverty succeed and thrive. Its National Center for Community Schools is a technical assistance provider specializing in building the capacity of schools, school districts, and community partners to organize around student success. The Center brings three decades of practice-based experience and proven strategies to this new partnership, ensuring that Maryland schools will benefit from the best practices in community-based education.

For more information about the Maryland State Department of Education, visit [marylandpublicschools.org](http://marylandpublicschools.org).

For more information about the National Center for Community Schools, visit [nccs.org](http://nccs.org).

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